

REMARKS

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-11, 13 and 17 stand rejected under 35USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ashenfelter (U.S. 4,576,555) in view of Fritchman (U.S.P 5,118,263) and further in view of Mangyo (U.S. 5,252,039). Claims 14 and 15 stand rejected under 35USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ashenfelter-Fritchman-Mangyo combination of the prior art references as applied to Claims 1-11 and 13 above, and further in view of Hayashi (U.S. 5,506,486). Claim 16 stands rejected under 35USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ashenfelter (U.S. 4,576,555) in view of Fritchman (U.S. 5,118,263)

To expedite the prosecution, claims 1 and 16 have been amended by adding a feature related to the shape and position of the oil fence and the new limitations of claims 1 and 16 render the remaining claims allowable over the cited art as discussed below.

According to Mangyo, it is described that the lubricating oil 33 supplied from the first outlet 37b is temporarily stored in the oil sump 39 (see column 5, lines 59-61). This operation will be explained with reference to the accompanying Exhibit A which corresponds to Fig. 3 of Mangyo.

The lubricant oil discharged from the first outlet 37b flows as follows:

- (1) In case, in Exhibit A, the lubricant oil flows from the first outlet 37b to the right side of the crankshaft 25, the lubricant oil scatters radially due to the centrifugal force generated by the rotation of the crankshaft 25, and then the scattered lubricant oil collides with the balance weight 100 so as to flow downward by gravity. Then the lubricant oil radially scatters from the lowest end of the balance weight 100 due to a centrifugal force generated by the rotation of the rotor 24 to collide with the inner surface of the stator 23. Then the lubricant oil flows along the inner surface of the stator downward by gravity.

(2) In case, in Exhibit A, the lubricant oil flows from the first outlet 37b to the left side of the crankshaft 25, the lubricant oil scatters radially due to the centrifugal force generated by the rotation of the crankshaft 25, and then the scattered lubricant oil collides with the inner surface of the stator 23. Then the lubricant oil flows along the inner surface of the stator downward by gravity.

The above-mentioned two different flows of the lubricant oil are indicated by a set of rightward and downward arrows and another set of leftward and downward arrows respectively.

From the above explanation it will be understood that one located on an extension of the flow of the lubricant oil discharged radially from the first outlet 37b to operate as a vertical wall with respect to the radially discharged oil flow is the balance weight 100 of the rotor 24 as well as the inner surface of the stator 23. Thus the annular flange 38a of Mangyo does not function as the vertical wall recited in claim 1.

Although the annular flange 38a has a vertical wall, this vertical wall is not located on the extension of the lubricant oil discharged from the first outlet 37b. More specifically, the vertical wall of the annular flange 38a is located below the extension of the lubricant oil flow. Therefore, the vertical wall of the annular flange 38b does not correspond to the vertical wall recited in claim 1.

As mentioned above, although Mangyo describes that the lubricant oil discharged from the outlet 37b is temporarily stored in the oil sump 39, this simply means that a portion of the lubricant oil discharged from the first outlet 37b flows along various parts as explained above to be finally retained in the oil sump 39 through downward flow by gravity. Therefore, Mangyo does not teach specific shape and position of the annular flange 38a so that the scattering lubricant oil directly collide with the vertical wall of the annular flange 38a.

The oil fence recited in claim 1 has the vertical wall having a shape and a position with respect to the oil feed mechanism so that the radially scattering lubricant oil directly collide with the vertical wall. As a result, the radially scattering lubricant oil does not reach the inner surface of the hermetic vessel or the sealed housing thereby effectively collecting the scattering

lubricant oil. Mangyo does not teach such shape and position of the annular flange 38a. Furthermore, Mangyo does not suggest the above-mentioned operation of the vertical wall, i.e. preventing the lubricant oil from directly colliding with the inner surface of the hermetic vessel.

Turning to claim 16, neither Ashenfelter nor Fritchman discloses the vertical wall recited in Claim 16 which defines the shape and position of the oil fence having the vertical wall in the same manner as claim 1.

It is believed that all of the objections and rejections will be overcome by the current amendment. Reconsideration and an early allowance are respectfully solicited.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 22-0185, under Order No. 21900-00052-US1 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: October 9, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

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EXHIBIT A

